

INFLUENZA SITUATION – SEASON 2025/2026 (Week 15, up to 12 April 2026)

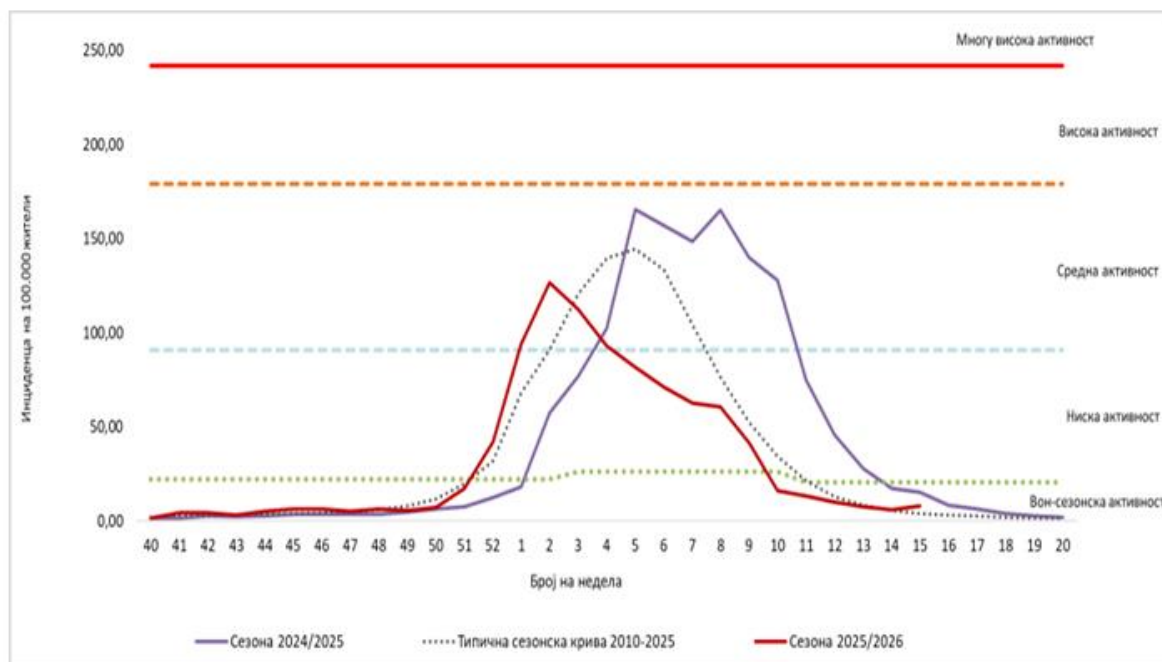
Weekly data

During week 15 of 2026 (06–12 April 2026), 145 cases ($I = 7.9/100,000$) of grouped reports of influenza / influenza-like illnesses were reported, which is 31.8% more compared to the previous week ($n = 110$).

The number of reported cases this week, compared to week 15 of the previous season ($n = 283$), has decreased by 48.8%, while compared to the number for week 15 of the typical epidemic curve (modeled from the last 15 seasons) ($n = 75$), it has increased by 93.1% (Figure 1).

During week 15, the registered incidence falls within off-season activity levels (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Intensity levels and weekly distribution of influenza / influenza-like illness cases according to the expected epidemic curve 2010–2025, season 2024/2025, and season 2025/2026.

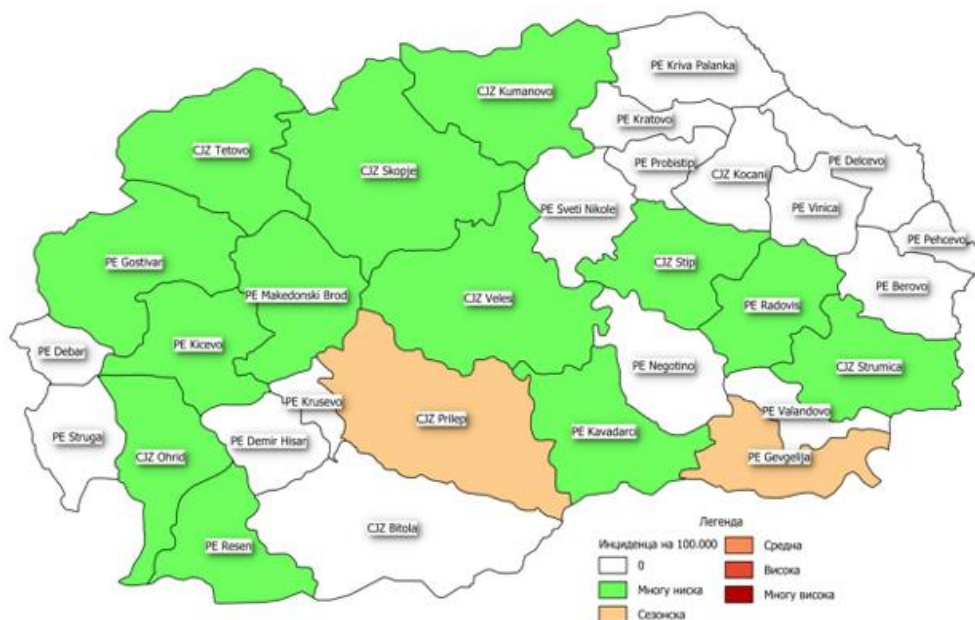


Regarding age distribution, 105 cases are among individuals aged 15–64 years, 17 are aged over 65 years, 13 are children aged 5–14 years, and 10 are children aged 0–4 years. The highest incidence (10.4/100,000) is registered among children aged 0–4 years.

The reported cases come from 15 Centers for Public Health / regional units: Skopje – 32, Prilep – 31, Tetovo – 21, Gevgelija – 17, Gostivar – 10, while in Kichevo, Resen, Veles, Kavadarci, Kumanovo, Ohrid, Makedonski Brod, Strumica, Shtip, and Radovish, the number of reported cases is below 10. In Bitola, Demir Hisar, Negotino, Sveti Nikole, Kochani, Berovo, Vinica, Delchevo, Pehchevo, Kriva Palanka, Kratovo, Debar, Struga, Krushevo, Valandovo, and Probishtip, no cases of influenza or influenza-like illnesses have been reported.

In two Centers for Public Health / regional units (CPH Prilep and RU Gevgelija), seasonal activity has been recorded, while in 13 units, very low influenza virus activity has been observed (Cartogram 1).

Cartogram 1. Level of influenza activity according to incidence per 100,000 population, week 15, 2026.



VIROLOGICAL SURVEILLANCE

During the 15th reporting week of 2026, 25 specimens from routine and SARI surveillance were received at the virology laboratory of the Institute of Public Health for laboratory testing, simultaneously tested for Influenza, SARS-CoV-2, and/or RSV.

Out of the total tested specimens, no positive cases of Influenza were detected.

Additionally, out of 6 samples tested for RSV, 3 positive cases were detected (RSV type A – 1 and RSV type B – 2). No positive cases of SARS-CoV-2 were detected.

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SURVEILLANCE – Cumulative Data

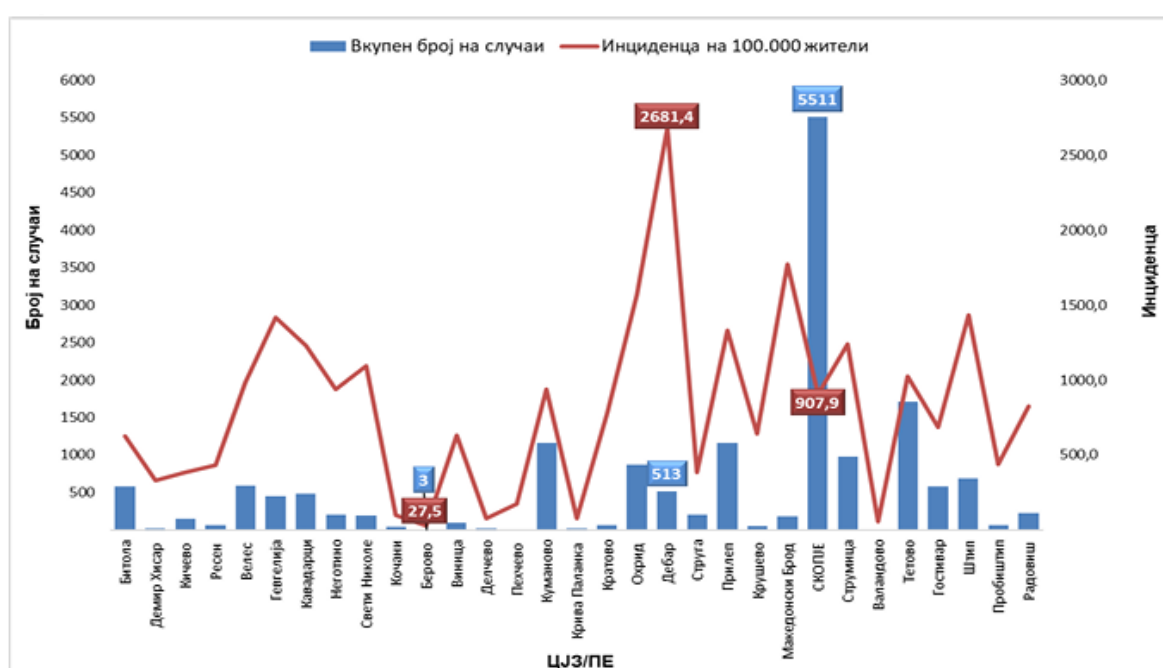
In the 2025/2026 season, the total number of influenza / influenza-like illness cases is 16,867 ($I = 918.3/100,000$).

Compared to the same period of the previous season ($n = 25,613$), the number of reported cases has decreased by 34.1%, and compared to the model from the last 15 seasons ($n = 20,613$), a decrease of 18.2% is registered.

Cumulatively, cases have been reported from all Centers for Public Health / regional units. The highest number of cases ($n = 5,511$) has been registered in the Skopje region, while the highest cumulative incidence ($I = 2,681.4/100,000$) has been recorded in the Debar region ($n = 513$) (Table 1 in the Appendix).

Regarding the distribution of cases by age group, the largest number of cases has been reported in the age group that comprises the majority of the population (15–64 years) – 9,808 cases (58.1%), while the highest incidence (2,032.7/100,000) is registered in the 0–4 age group ($n = 1,962$) (Figure 2, Table 1 in the Appendix).

Figure 2. Distribution of seasonal influenza cases by Centers for Public Health / regional units and incidence per 100,000 population, season 2025/2026.



Distribution of seasonal influenza / influenza-like illness cases by month (Table 1 in the Appendix):

- October – 338 cases or 2.0%
- November – 438 cases or 2.6%
- December – 1,324 cases or 7.8%
- January – 9,315 cases or 55.2%
- February – 4,336 cases or 25.7%
- March – 861 cases or 5.1%
- April (up to 12 April 2026) – 255 cases or 1.5%

During the influenza season, four deaths associated with influenza have been recorded.

VIROLOGICAL SURVEILLANCE – Cumulative Data

Since the start of the 2025/2026 season, up to week 15/2026, a total of 1,220 specimens from routine and sentinel SARI surveillance have been received at the virology laboratory of the Institute of Public Health. All received specimens were tested for the presence of influenza virus, SARS-CoV-2, and/or RSV.

A total of 126 positive influenza cases have been detected:

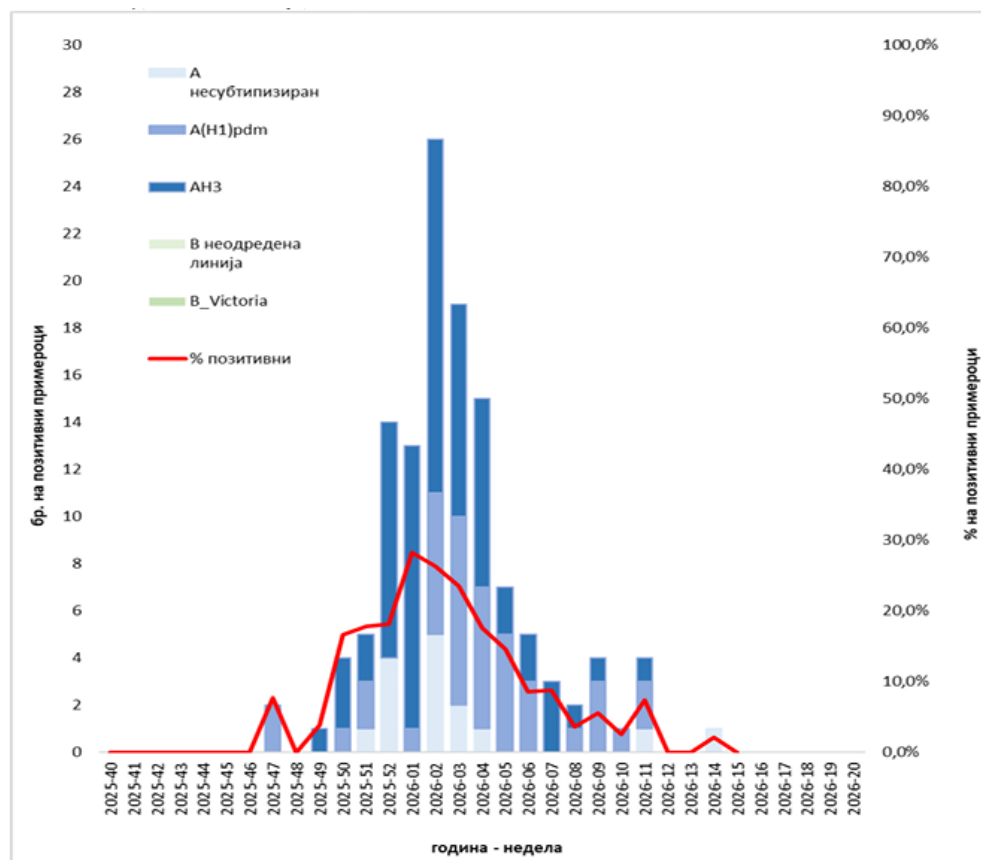
- Influenza A – 126
 - Influenza A(H1)pdm09 – 41 (32.5%)
 - Influenza A(H3) – 70 (55.6%)
 - Influenza A – unsubtype – 15 (11.9%)
- Influenza B – 0

A total of 26 positive cases of SARS-CoV-2 have been recorded.

A total of 146 positive cases of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) have been recorded (RSV unsubtype – 5, RSV-A – 40, and RSV-B – 101).

Additionally, 5 other respiratory viruses have been detected among the tested samples.

Figure 3. Weekly distribution of the number and percentage of positive influenza samples, routine and sentinel surveillance, Republic of North Macedonia, 2025/2026.



EPIDEMIOLOGICAL COMMENT

During the fifteenth week of 2026, an increase in the number of cases and the incidence of influenza-like illnesses is registered on a weekly level; however, they remain within off-season activity levels. The results obtained from virological influenza surveillance indicate sporadic geographic activity of the influenza virus. The positivity rate is below the 10% threshold.

According to these data, the country is experiencing low intensity of influenza virus circulation.

GENERAL PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Source: <https://sezonskigrip.mk/>

General protective measures against influenza apply to all acute respiratory diseases and can be highly beneficial, especially if practiced throughout the entire winter period:

- Avoid gatherings and staying in crowded indoor spaces; avoid close contact with people who are ill or suspected to be ill (coughing, sneezing, fever).
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water or use disinfectant.
- Keep living spaces warm and ventilate rooms regularly.
- Dress warmly in layers; warm baths are recommended.
- Drink warm beverages (teas and soups), fresh fruit juices, and lemon water.
- Consume fresh foods rich in vitamins and minerals, especially fruits and vegetables. Foods high in vitamin C (such as citrus fruits—lemons and oranges) are particularly recommended. If fresh food is not always available, multivitamin drinks and supplements may be used.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle, including good sleep and rest, healthy nutrition, physical and mental activity, and stress reduction.

A strong immune system can help you stay healthy or cope more easily with influenza and influenza-like illnesses. However, even healthy individuals with strong immunity can still become infected.

What to do if you get sick with influenza?

Follow these recommendations:

- Stay at home and do not go to work, school, or crowded places.
- Rest and consume plenty of fluids and light food.
- Avoid close contact with household members and do not receive visitors while ill.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing; dispose of it after use.
- Wear a protective mask when in contact with household members, especially when coughing or sneezing.
- Practice frequent and thorough handwashing with warm water and soap.
- Use wet wipes containing alcohol or hand disinfectants.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with your hands.
- Ventilate the room where you stay frequently while ill.
- Keep your surroundings clean—objects and surfaces should be regularly disinfected.

- If you are over 65 years old, have chronic conditions, or if symptoms worsen or persist for several days, seek medical assistance.

INFLUENZA VACCINATION

Vaccination against seasonal influenza is the most effective protection against this disease. The Institute of Public Health recommends vaccination for the entire population, especially for individuals belonging to so-called high-risk groups (according to World Health Organization recommendations):

- Elderly persons (over 65 years)
- Children aged 6–59 months
- Individuals older than 6 months with chronic diseases
- Pregnant women
- Healthcare workers

For the 2025/2026 season, the Ministry of Health provided 80,000 doses of free quadrivalent vaccine intended for priority population groups. Vaccination began on 16 October 2025 and is carried out in Centers for Public Health and their regional units and/or Health Centers. Vaccination of healthcare workers in Skopje is conducted at the Institute of Public Health.

According to data from the Administration for Electronic Health, from the start of vaccination until the closing of this report, a total of 77,281 individuals from high-risk categories have been vaccinated with free vaccines.

Additionally, 2,400 doses of commercial vaccines have been procured by the Centers for Public Health for the rest of the population not included in the priority groups. These are available for a fee and administered at the Centers for Public Health and their regional units.

According to the Administration for Electronic Health, a total of 1,841 individuals have been vaccinated with commercial vaccines.

By the end of week 15, a total of 79,122 individuals in the Republic of North Macedonia have been vaccinated with either free or commercial vaccines.

EUROPEAN REGION

Source: <https://erviss.org/>

According to the ERVISS report published for week 14 of 2026 on influenza virus activity across the WHO European Region:

- Rates of influenza-like illness (ILI) and/or acute respiratory infection (ARI) are above baseline in only 1 out of 27 reporting countries in the WHO European Region.
- Influenza virus circulation is at interseasonal levels in most reporting countries.
- Regional indicators for SARS-CoV-2 activity remain at baseline levels.
- The positivity rate for RSV remains elevated, but the number of tests and registered positive cases continues to decline at the regional level.